(c) whether Government have found out of reasons for such losses; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the percentage of the losses incurred due to each of the said reasons?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) No, Sir. The ever increasing trend of commercial losses of State Power Utilities has been arrested after 2001-02.

(b) The commercial losses (without subsidy) in State Electricity Boards have increased from Rs. 4,560 crores during 1992-93 to Rs. 25,259 crores during 2000-01. According to data compiled by Power Finance Corporation, the losses of State Utilities have reduced from 26,596 crores in 2001-02 to Rs. 20,231 crores in 2003-04. Losses as percentage of turnover have started exhibiting a declining trend which is expected to be maintained in coming years.

(c) and (d) The major factors responsible for losses of power utilities, *inter alia*, include theft of power, high technical losses, over staffing in utilities, poor metering, billing and collection, irrational tarrif and non-payment of subsidies by the Government.

A major programme for extending metering to all feeders and consumers is under implementation which will make energy accounting and audit possible and would also segregate losses on account of different factors.

Separate Courts to deal with patents and intellectual property Rights issues

*307. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the intellectual property rights experts have urged the Government to have separate courts to deal with issues connected with patents and intellectual property rights in the light of the new patent regime invoked from 1st January, 2005;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestion made by the experts;

(c) whether any action has been initiated in this direction by the Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (e) in the new patent regime, effective from 1st January, 2005, there is no proposal to set up separate courts to deal with issues connected with patents and intellectual property rights. However, in view of the specialised nature of the work, Government has set up an Intellectual Property Appellate Board as an appellate forum against orders of the Registrar of Trade Marks and also the Registrar of Geographical Indications. Its jurisdiction is further proposed to be extended to the decisions of the Controller of Patents under the Indian Patent Act.

Financial assistance for modernisation of police

†308. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:

PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to provide full financial assistance for the modernisation of the police forces of the States;

(b) if so, the state-wise details thereof; and

(c) by when the decision is likely to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) A proposal to revise the scheme for modernization of the State Police Forces (MPF Scheme) by categorizing the States into 2 (two) categories "A" & "B" to provide Central funding as 100% and 75% is presently under consideration of the Government. The proposed re-categorization of the States is as under:—

Category "A" (100% Central funding):

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.